

**Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education Scrutiny Committee –  
6 March 2013**

**Report of the Director of the Urban Environment**

**Directorate of the Urban Environment's Equality Action Plan for  
2013/2014**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To consider the annual equality action plan for 2013/2014 for the Directorate of the Urban Environment.

**Background**

2. The production of Directorate equality and diversity action plans is an important part of the Council's approach to promoting equality, ensuring that all Directorates maintain a focus on planning work to deliver appropriate services, on ensuring employees are treated fairly and in meeting the requirements of equality legislation.
3. Overview and scrutiny of corporate equality issues is included in the terms of reference of the Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education Scrutiny Committee. Consideration of individual Directorate's action plans is split up amongst the different scrutiny committees, with this committee responsible for the Directorate of the Urban Environment's plan. Following scrutiny, it will be approved by the appropriate Cabinet Members before being published on the Council's equality web pages.
4. The Directorate of the Urban Environment's action plan for 2013/2014 is attached and sets out actions relating to different service areas within the Directorate. The Directorate's plan also supports the continuing implementation of the Equality Act 2010 and contributes to achieving the overall Council equality objectives, published in 2012 in accordance with the specific public sector equality duties.
5. An annual report setting out progress with the Directorate's action plan for 2012/2013 will be completed at the end of the year and circulated to the committee for its June 2013 meeting.

## **Finance**

6. Any costs associated with implementing the action plan will be met from existing budgets.

## **Law**

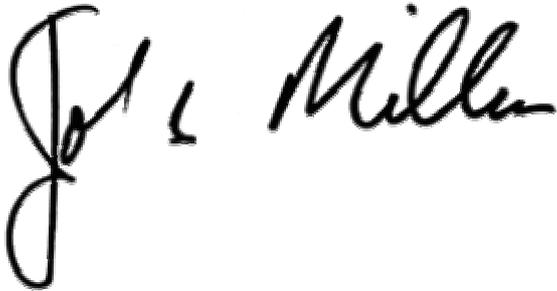
7. The Equality Act 2010 replaced the previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. The first duties of the Act came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2010.
8. The general public sector equality duty under the Act came into force on 5th April 2011 requiring public authorities to pay due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, covering the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
9. The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 required public authorities to publish equality information by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2012 (and annually thereafter) and equality objectives by 5<sup>th</sup> April 2012.

## **Equality Impact**

10. The action plan sets out proposed actions for promoting equality in the Directorate of the Urban Environment during 2013/2014. A number of the actions included in the plan derive from equality impact assessments (EIAs) carried out on Directorate services, cover EIAs due to be undertaken in 2013/2014 or relate to data to be collected which can assist in judging impact. Performance indicators or outcomes are identified against each target so that progress in achieving the action plan can be monitored and reviewed.
11. Issues relating to children and young people are covered in more detail in the Directorate of Children's Services annual equality action plans.

## **Recommendation**

12. It is recommended that committee considers and comments on the Directorate of the Urban Environment's equality action plan for 2013/2014.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Millar'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J'.

John Millar  
Director of the Urban Environment

Contact Officer: Emma Wright  
Telephone: 01384 818826  
Email: [emma.wright@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:emma.wright@dudley.gov.uk)

### **List of Background Papers**

Directorate of the Urban Environment's Equality Action Plan for  
2013/2014

## Directorate of the Urban Environment

### Annual Equality Action Plan for 2013/2014

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The equality action plan sets out the Directorate of the Urban Environment's objectives for the year 2013/2014, and contributes to implementing the Council's Equality Policy. It includes the Directorate's objectives, as well as addressing equality issues existent due to relevant legislation, and taking into consideration corporate objectives.
- 1.2 The action plan covers the period from April 2013 to March 2014 and contains:
- an explanation of its relationship with other plans
  - a summary of the Directorate's equality vision and values, roles and responsibilities
  - key issues and targets for the plan
  - the action plan
- 1.3 The Directorate of the Urban Environment is a large Directorate, carrying out a number of diverse functions, which are:

#### Culture & Leisure

Sport & Physical Activity  
Attractions & Amenities

#### Planning & Environmental Health

Planning Services  
Environmental Health & Trading Standards

#### Economic Regeneration & Transportation

Economic Regeneration Delivery  
Traffic & Transportation

#### Environmental Management

Street & Green Care  
Waste Care

Underpinning these functions are the relevant policy and support services, a number of which are included within the Policy and Executive Support Team.

- 1.4 A review of the Directorate's achievements against the objectives detailed in its 2012/2013 action plan will be included in the annual report produced at the end of the 2012/2013 municipal year.
- 1.5 The action plan has been drawn up against the background of the directorate continuing to need to deliver budget reductions as part of the Council's overall savings package. As in recent years, these may have some impact on the delivery of the plan during 2013/2014.

## **2 Relationship with other plans**

- 2.1 The Directorate's action plan forms part of the authority's response to how it will deal with equality objectives. The priorities and targets relate and contribute, where relevant, to the Council Plan, the Council's Equality Scheme and the Borough's Community Strategy.
- 2.2 The principles and objectives of the action plan are also integrated into service plans within the Directorate and the action plan will form part of the overall strategic approach for the Directorate of the Urban Environment.
- 2.3 The Council's Equality Scheme sets out the overall approach to advancing equality across the organisation to ensure that progress is made in advancing equality and to ensure that it continues to implement the requirements of the specific public sector duties under the Equality Act 2010.
- 2.4 Council-wide progress in promoting equality is reported each year in the annual review of equality, which is submitted to the Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education Scrutiny Committee (as the scrutiny committee with responsibility for corporate equality issues) and the Cabinet for approval.

## **3 Visions and Values**

- 3.1 The Directorate is covered by all aspects of the Council's Equality Policy, and will take action to implement the policy both in terms of employment practices and service provision.
- 3.2 All employees of the Directorate have an individual responsibility to comply with the relevant legislation, policies and procedures relating to equality. This responsibility is applied in the Directorate's dealings with

members, employees, job applicants, residents, service users, other members of the public and external organisations. Specific responsibilities for ensuring equality in both employment and service provision, rests with the Directorate's Management Team, and all Heads of Service, with the support of the Principal Human Resources Officers who provide ongoing HR advice to the Directorate. The Executive Support Team Leader, a member of the Directorate's Management Team, has the responsibility for co-ordinating this work across the Directorate.

- 3.3 In attempting to ensure that equality is mainstreamed into service provision, employees of the Directorate undertake relevant training and development in these areas. Training and development needs of employees in the Directorate are identified in annual performance review and development discussions with their line managers. Future planned training for employees of the Directorate will be through a corporate e-learning training package, which all employees in the Directorate will be required to undertake during the 2013/2014 year.

#### 4 **Key issues and targets for 2013/2014**

The Council's overall commitment to Equality is set out in the Equality Policy, and the Equality Scheme details the Council's action plan for promoting equality objectives.

- 4.1 The Directorate's priorities in formulating its 2013/2014 action plan are based around the following key issues:

(1) **Equality Scheme**

The Directorate action plan is linked to the Corporate Equality Scheme, which sets out the Council's approach to promoting equality across all its services and employment. The Council has identified in its Equality Scheme the issues and challenges which need to be addressed and a number of Equality Objectives have been outlined in the scheme.

(2) **Equality Impact Assessments**

An impact assessment is a systematic and thorough way of appraising a service and the impact that it will have on different groups and communities. The aim of an impact assessment is to assess whether that policies and services are unfair or discriminatory in the way that they impact on different groups in the community, and provides an opportunity to address any

areas of adverse impact identified and positively highlight where equality has been progressed for different groups.

The Directorate has a programme of equality impact assessments for 2013/ 2014 (***priority 1 – action plan for 2013/2014***), with a further ongoing prioritised programme of impact assessments to be determined for future years.

The Equality Impact Assessments to take place between April 2013 and March 2014 are:

- Museums Service
- Review of Economic Regeneration Strategy
- Waste Recycling Service

### (3) **Directorate Equality Priorities**

The Directorate has identified its overall equality priorities and the 2013/2014 action plan objectives contribute towards achieving some of these priorities.

The Directorate's overall equality priorities are as follows:

- To ensure that DUE services continue to be accessible to all;
- To ensure that changes in service delivery introduced through legislation / statutory requirements consider the impact on protected groups;
- Continue the improvements to the numbers of employees within the Directorate from under-represented groups and to improve employee knowledge and skills;
- To ensure equality impact assessments are undertaken against proposed / future budget savings, mapped against protected characteristics where appropriate;
- To ensure the delivery of actions identified within Equality Impact Assessments;
- To ensure Directorate compliance against the Public Sector Equality Duty.

4.2 The Directorate's specific objectives for 2013/2014 relating to equality are detailed in this action plan. Actions can be identified through carrying out an Equality Impact Assessment, be linked to service plans or relate to specific initiatives or work ongoing in a particular service area during the 12 months covered by this action plan.

- 4.3 Particular priority, where appropriate, will be assigned to supporting corporate equality priorities identified in the 2012 annual review of equality and the revised equality scheme, and progressing work through the Corporate Equality and Diversity Leadership Group.

## 5 **Consultation**

- 5.1 The Directorate undertakes or is involved in a wide range of consultation about its services and strategic priorities. Members of the Directorate's Disability Consultation Group, which comprises of relevant Directorate officers, representatives from Access in Dudley and residents of the borough, continue to give an input into how we can improve the Directorate's services. The Directorate Management Team has been involved in determining the priorities identified in this Action Plan.

## 6 **Monitoring**

- 6.1 Progress regarding the achievement of the objectives detailed in the action plan will be monitored by the Directorate's Management Team and the Directorate's Equality Group.

## 7 **The Action Plan**

- 7.1 The action plan is set out in the following tables.

**Directorate of the Urban Environment – Equality Action Plan for 2013/2014**

<b>Objective (and Lead Officer)</b>	<b>Detailed Action/ Target</b>	<b>Target Date/ Milestones</b>	<b>Planned Outcome/Performance Indicator</b>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Priority 1</b></p> <p>Complete equality impact assessments in the following areas:</p> <p><b>Lead Officer – Stuart Connelly</b></p> <p><b>Lead Officer – Rupert Dugdale</b></p> <p><b>Lead Officer – Graham Bailey</b></p>	<p>Complete impact assessments in the following areas:</p> <p>Museums Service</p> <p>Review of Economic Regeneration Strategy</p> <p>Recycling Service</p>	<p>March 2014</p> <p>March 2014</p> <p>March 2014</p>	<p>Full impact assessments completed within the timescales</p> <p>Integration of identified actions into Service Plans</p> <p>Achievement of Equality Scheme objectives</p>

**Directorate of the Urban Environment – Equality Action Plan for 2013/2014**

Objective (and Lead Officer)	Detailed Action/ Target	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/Performance Indicator
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Priority 2</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Countryside &amp; Parks</b></p> <p>To provide work based volunteer opportunities in nature reserves to hard to reach groups</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Lead Officer – Garry Dean</b></p>	<p>To develop links and work with local voluntary organisations to offer volunteer opportunities within the nature reserves service.</p> <p>To provide individuals from hard to reach and minority groups with the opportunity to undertake volunteer opportunities in the workplace, aiming to give the opportunity to experience a different areas of work and build confidence.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">September 2013</p> <p style="text-align: center;">March 2014</p>	<p>To provide a minimum of 1 volunteering session in a nature reserve each week</p>

**Directorate of the Urban Environment – Equality Action Plan for 2013/2014**

Objective (and Lead Officer)	Detailed Action/ Target	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/Performance Indicator
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Priority 3</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Waste Service Changes</b> To ensure that Equality and Diversity is embedded in the service changes to the Recycling Service planned during 2013-2104</p> <p><b>Lead Officer – Graham Bailey</b></p>	<p>Effective Communications relating to the recycling service changes to reach all residents and communities within the Borough</p> <p>To ensure continuity of service in the provision of assisted collections</p> <p>To ensure that any potential equality impact of the proposed service changes is fully assessed and considered in the implementation of the changed service</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">July 2013</p> <p style="text-align: center;">March 2014</p> <p style="text-align: center;">March 2014</p>	<p>The implementation of an improved waste and recycling collection service that meets the objectives of the Council's Equality Scheme and the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty</p>

**Directorate of the Urban Environment – Equality Action Plan for 2013/2014**

Objective (and Lead Officer)	Detailed Action/ Target	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/Performance Indicator
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Priority 4</b></p> <p><b>Community Payback Team</b> To offer opportunities for offenders to undertake environmental improvement works within the Environmental Management Division</p> <p><b>Lead Officer – Garry Dean</b></p>	<p>To work in partnership with the Probation Service Community Payback Team, to offer offenders a range of environmental and street cleansing opportunities in various locations across the Borough</p>	<p>March 2014</p>	<p>To provide 1 work based activity each week for a team of offenders</p>

**Directorate of the Urban Environment – Equality Action Plan for 2013/2014**

Objective (and Lead Officer)	Detailed Action/ Target	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/Performance Indicator
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Priority 5</b></p> <p><b>Museums Accreditation</b> To submit applications to the ACE (Arts Council England) for accreditation of both Dudley Museum and Art Gallery, and Broadfield House Glass Museum</p> <p><b>Lead Officer – Stuart Connelly/Sally Orton</b></p>	<p>To review user services in accordance with the requirements of the accreditation process and to take account of Equality and Diversity requirements accordingly</p> <p>To review visitor facilities in accordance with the requirements of the accreditation process and to take account of Equality and Diversity requirements accordingly</p>	<p>March 2014</p> <p>March 2014</p>	<p>Consultation undertaken with users on the services we provide</p> <p>Assessment of information, signage and visitor facilities to ensure the museums service is accessed by the broadest range of users</p>

**Directorate of the Urban Environment – Equality Action Plan for 2013/2014**

Objective (and Lead Officer)	Detailed Action/ Target	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/Performance Indicator
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Priority 6</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Options + Scheme</b> To review the current Options+ concession scheme in light of changes to welfare payments</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Lead Officer – Andy Webb</b></p>	<p>To review the current categories which qualify for concession</p> <p>To evaluate existing categories against the revised welfare payment structure</p> <p>To recommend changes as appropriate to the Cabinet Member for Culture &amp; Environment and to seek approval for amending the Options+ scheme</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">April 2013</p> <p style="text-align: center;">June 2013</p> <p style="text-align: center;">September 2013</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Concession categories evaluated in light of national changes to welfare payments</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Revisions to the Options+ scheme drafted for consultation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Decision sheet prepared outlining any changes proposed to the Option+ scheme</p>

**Directorate of the Urban Environment – Equality Action Plan for 2013/2014**

Objective (and Lead Officer)	Detailed Action/ Target	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/Performance Indicator
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Priority 7</b></p> <p><b>Dudley Business Loan Fund</b> To ensure that the take up of the Dudley Business Loan Fund by people from protected groups is representative of their share of the Borough's population</p> <p><b>Lead Officer: Wayne George</b></p>	<p>Review data collection relating to the successful take up of the Dudley Business Loan Fund by people from protected groups</p> <p>To benchmark the current take up of the Dudley Business Loan Fund against other local authorities</p> <p>To consider possible actions that could be put into place to increase the take up of the Business Load Fund by people from protected and hard to reach groups</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">June 2013</p> <p style="text-align: center;">September 2013</p> <p style="text-align: center;">March 2014</p>	<p>The successful take up of the Business Loan Fund by people from protected and hard to reach groups, monitored by quarterly data</p>